

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2019

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I rise today to correct the official record regarding two of my recorded votes from yesterday's House consideration of H.R. 2740, the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2020.

During the chamber's recorded vote on House Amendment 379 I voted aye rather no, which was not my intention. Further, although I was not able to cast a vote-for House Amendment 381, I wish to note that I would have voted aye.

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE,
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 2019

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3055) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes:

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Chair, my amendment would place a funding limitation on the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to utilize the Title 42 hiring authority.

The Title 42 hiring authority gives the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) the ability to incentivize and expedite the recruitment of scientists and other experts

working in the cutting edge of public health. Congress authorized this authority for HHS alone in the 1940s. However, in 2006, this authority was extended to the Environmental Protection Agency by an appropriations bill—it did not go through the authorization process.

A 2015 report by the EPA's Office of Inspector General discovered that the EPA did not properly demonstrate a need to use the Title 42 hiring authority, nor did it provide clear and convincing justification for its continued use. As of 2015, the total annual salary for EPA Title 42 appointments is between \$3.5 million and \$6.75 million. This is just further evidence that the EPA's use of the Title 42 hiring authority must come to an end. The ability of the EPA to hire outside of the regular General Services scale must first go through regular order.

I urge support for this amendment so that Congress has the time to fully review this problematic hiring authority before appropriating additional funding.